

Scientific Note

RECENT CALIFORNIA RECORDS FOR THE SAWFLY *XIPHYDRIA MELLIPES* HARRIS (HYMENOPTERA: XIPHYDRIIDAE)

The Xiphydriidae, with 22 genera and 90 species, is a small family of wood-boring sawflies that are found in most of the world except Africa (Smith, D. R. 1976. *Trans. Am. Entomol. Soc.*, 102: 101–131). The only North American genus is *Xiphydria*, with 10 species now occurring in the U.S. and Canada (Smith, D. R. 1983. *Proc. Entomol. Soc. Wash.*, 85: 860–861). In his revision of *Xiphydria*, Smith (1976) states that *X. mellipes* Harris is the most widespread North American species in the genus occurring across Canada and the northern U.S. Although (especially southern) British Columbia has several records, his distribution map (Fig. 1) and text show the only western U.S. records to be from NW Montana and NE Oregon.

In the last decade *X. mellipes* has been recorded from non-quarantine situations from several California locations (Fig. 1) in Fresno, Sacramento, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties; therefore, its listed nearctic distribution warrants expansion. *Xiphydria mellipes* is apparently restricted to *Betula* spp., although other questionable host records exist (Smith 1976: 118–119). It occurs in dead or decaying logs, and commonly emerges from firewood brought into buildings (Smith 1976). It bores galleries about 2.5 mm dia. in the partly decaying heartwood of standing trees (Yuasa, H. 1922. *Illinois Biol. Monographs*, 7[4]: 1–172).

It is uncertain if the California records represent a recent range expansion, either naturally or by movement of wood (e.g., firewood), or reflect a more accurate sampling of the state's fauna. Several *Betula* spp. have been planted in California urban settings as ornamentals, but two native species do exist in the state: *Betula glandulosa* Michaux [north California] and *Betula occidentalis* Hook [north California, south through the Sierra Nevada to desert mountain ranges and the Great Basin] (Hickman, J. C. [ed.] 1993. *The Jepson manual, higher plants of California*. Univ. California Press, Berkeley; Griffin, J. R. & W. B. Critchfield. 1972. *USDA Forest Serv. Res. Paper, PSW-82/1972: map 13.*). It seems most probable that *X. mellipes* occurs indigenously in California but was undetected until recently. It may have moved into urban settings naturally infesting aging ornamental *Betula*, and/or with the movement of firewood from the northern or Sierran parts of the state.

Xiphydria mellipes represents the second, but most confirmed, species of *Xiphydria* occurring in California. A single (questionable) record for *X. maculata* Say, an otherwise eastern species primarily associated with *Acer* spp., exists for California (Smith 1976: fig. 3); that record is "... considerably out of the range of *maculata* and is based on a single specimen labeled 'Cal.', 'Collection T. Pergande.'" (Smith 1976: 115).

Records.—CALIFORNIA. *FRESNO Co.*: Fresno, 11 Apr 1991, N. Smith, "ex birch," 3 males, 4 females. *NAPA Co.*: Napa, 6 Jan 1982, "Whitmer" collr., 1 male, 1 female. *SACRAMENTO Co.*: no locality given, 16 Dec 1991, L. Allen, "reared *Betula* sp.," 1 male, 1 female. *SAN MATEO Co.*:

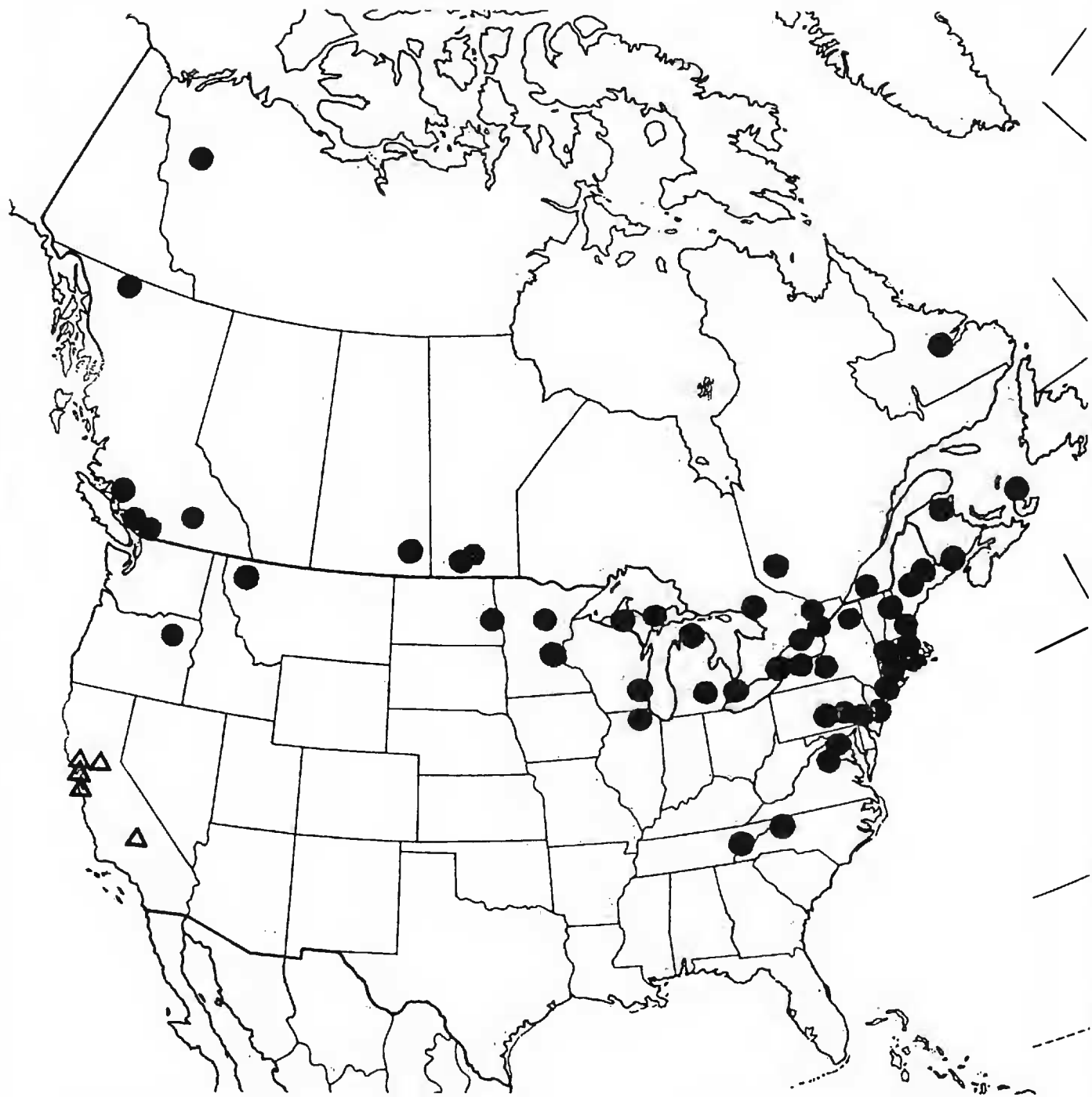


Figure 1. Distribution of *Xiphydria mellipes*, modified from Smith (1976: fig. 4). Black dots are records in Smith (1976), white triangles are added California records.

Redwood City, 27 Feb 1992, "Eaton" collr., "in house," 1 female. SANTA CLARA Co.: no locality given, late Mar or early Apr 1994, A. Clark, "found inside [residence] near/on window," 1 female.

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